Amendment to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A suture loading assembly for threading suture material through a surgical instrument, the suture loading assembly comprising:

a body,

an attaching member extending from the body for attaching the body on an exterior portion of the surgical instrument; and,

a flexible loop extending from a distal end of the body, wherein the flexible loop in a first position, is provided through an opening in the body of the surgical instrument, and in a second position is provided at least partially retracted from said opening, wherein in said second position, said suture material is at least partially provided within said surgical instrument opening.

2. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 1 wherein the body includes a bore from which the loop extends.

3. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 1 wherein the attaching member includes two legs extending from the body, an inner portion of each leg curved to accept a cylindrical member of a surgical instrument, wherein the attaching member is slidable along the cylindrical member of the surgical instrument.

4. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 3 wherein an outer portion of each leg includes an indented area for forming a finger grip.

5. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 1 further comprising a cap surrounding a portion of the body.

6. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 5 wherein the cap includes finger grips.

7. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 6 wherein the finger grips are indents in sides of the cap.

8. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 5 wherein the cap includes openings for receiving the body and the attaching member.

9. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 1 wherein the loop is made from wire.

10. (Original) The suture loading assembly of claim 9 further comprising a plug inserted within a proximal end of the body for retaining the wire within the body.

11. (Currently Amended) In combination, a suture securing instrument and a suture loading assembly,

the suture securing instrument comprising:

an elongated tubular portion having a distal end and a proximal end, the distal end including a ferrule accepting opening, the proximal end attached to a handle assembly;

the suture loading assembly comprising:

a body,

an attaching member extending from the body for attaching the body on an exterior portion of the elongated tubular portion of the suture securing instrument; and,

a flexible loop extending from a distal end of the body, wherein the flexible loop in a first position, is provided through an opening in a ferrule within said ferrule accepting opening, and in a second position is provided at least partially retracted from said ferrule, wherein in said second position, ~~said~~ suture material is at least partially provided within said ferrule.

12. (Original) The combination of claim 11 wherein the loop is threaded through the ferrule accepting opening.

13. (Original) The combination of claim 11 wherein the attaching member is slidable along the tubular portion of the suture securing instrument.

14. (Original) The combination of claim 13 wherein the attaching member includes two legs extending from the body, an inner portion of each leg curved to accept the tubular portion of the suture securing instrument.

15. (Original) The combination of claim 14 wherein an outer portion of each leg includes an indented area for providing a finger grip.

16. (Original) The combination of claim 11 wherein the suture loading assembly further comprises a cap surrounding the body and attaching member, the cap extending past the tubular portion.

17. (Original) The combination of claim 16 wherein the cap includes a pair of indents usable as finger grips.

18. (Original) The combination of claim 11 wherein the suture securing instrument further comprises an aperture in the elongated tubular portion, the aperture located proximally of the ferrule accepting opening, the flexible loop threaded through the aperture prior to threading through the ferrule accepting opening.

19. (Original) The combination of claim 18 further comprising a ferrule positioned in the ferrule accepting opening, the flexible loop threaded through the ferrule.

20. (Original) The combination of claim 11 wherein the loop is made from a preformed wire bent into a diamond shape.

21. (Previously Presented) A method of threading a suture securing instrument comprising:

mounting a suture loading assembly having a body upon a tubular body portion of the suture securing instrument with an attaching member that extends from the body of the suture threading assembly to mount the assembly on an exterior portion of the body of the suturing device; and,

threading a flexible loop extending from the suture loading assembly through a ferrule within a distal end of the suture loading assembly.

22. (Original) The method of claim 2 1 further comprising inserting suture material through the flexible loop.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 further comprising pulling the flexible loop proximally until the suture material is threaded through the ferrule.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 wherein pulling the flexible loop proximally comprises sliding the suture loading assembly proximally along the tubular portion of the suture securing instrument.

25. (Original) A kit for securing suture material within a body of a patient, the kit comprising:

a cutting and crimping device;

a ferrule loaded into the cutting and crimping device; and,

a suture loading assembly mounted on a tubular portion of the cutting and crimping device, a flexible loop extending from the suture loading assembly threaded through the ferrule.